(vi) Cruise operator M/s. Ocean Cruises India Pvt. Ltd. has been permitted to operate cruises from Goa to Lakshadweep *via* Cochin. Similarly Cruise operator M/s Star Cruises has been permitted to operate cruises from Mumbai to Lakshadweep (Kadmat Island), and Mumbai to Goa.

Acquisition of ships by SCI

2625. SHRI B.J.PANDA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Government propose to give block approval to the Shipping Corporation of India for acquisition of vessels;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how far this would help the Corporation to address the problems of ship acquisition?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) has submitted a block proposal for acquisition of 10 ships, viz,4. Aframax Tankers, 4 Panamax Bulk Carriers and 2 Cellular Container vessels to the Government. This would entail a total investment of about Rs. 2340 crores.

(c) The extent procedure for acquistion of ships includes processing of proposal by various agencies. Hence, the vessels acquisition under the block proposal is expected to expedite the process of acquisition of ships by SCI in view of the limited powers delegated to the SCI Board in approving capital investments decisions.

Conversion of Highways into National Highways in UP

f2626. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Uttar Pradesh have sent any proposal to convert some State Highways into National Highways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the number of State Highways out of them for which Government have agreed to convert them into National Highways; and

(d) by when the remaining highways would be converted into National Highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Government of Uttar Pradesh has submitted proposals for declaration of seven State Highways into-National Highways as per details given at Statement (See below)

(c) and (d) At present, emphasis is being given by this Ministry for development of roads already declared as National highways instead of declaring more roads as National Highways. Hence the Government has not agreed to the conversion of any of these roads as National Highways. The State Government has been informed accordingly.

Statement

Conversion of State Highways into National Highways in UP.,

SI. No.	Name of Road/Stretches
1.	Kuravali-Mainpuri-Karhal-Etawah road
2.	Sirsaganj-Karhal-Kishni-Vidhuna-Chobepurroad
3.	Bareilly-Badaaun-Bilsi-Gajraula-Chandpur-Bijnaurroad
4.	Lucknow-Raibareilly-Allahabad road
5.	Jagdishpur-Gauriganj-Amethi-Pratapgarh road
6.	Fatehpur-Raibareilly-Jagdishpur-Faizabadroad
7.	Lumbini Dubhi State Highway

Highways in Punjab and Bihar

†2627.SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.